

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-10 (canceled).

11. (Currently amended) A microscopic observing apparatus comprising:
 - a probe microscope;
 - an auxiliary microscope;
 - a specimen stage on which is placed a subject of observation that is to be observed using the probe microscope and the auxiliary microscope, and that allows an absolute position of the subject of observation to be adjusted;
 - a laser light irradiation device that irradiates laser light that is coaxial with the optical axis of the probe microscope onto the subject of observation; and
 - a microscope holding member that holds both of the probe microscope and the auxiliary microscope on the specimen stage,
 - wherein the auxiliary microscope is located such that a marker formed by the laser light irradiated onto on the subject of observation for positioning the probe microscope is visible.

12. (Previously Presented) The microscopic observing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the auxiliary microscope is a video microscope including a CCD camera with a macro lens.

Claims 13-15 (Canceled).

16. (Previously Presented) The microscopic observing apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the microscope holding member comprises:

a Z stage that stands upright on the specimen stage;
a θ stage that is mounted on a top end of the Z stage;

an arm that extends horizontally towards and above of the specimen stage, and that holds both of the probe microscope and the auxiliary microscope.

17. (Previously Presented) The microscopic observing apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein

the microscope holding member further comprises a rotating member that is linked to a distal end of the arm so as to be rotatable around a horizontal axis;

the probe microscope is attached to the arm so as to face an upper surface of the specimen stage; and

the auxiliary microscope is held such that an optical axis thereof intersects an optical axis of the probe microscope.

18. (Previously Presented) The microscopic observing apparatus according to Claim 16, wherein

the probe microscope is held such that a distal end thereof appears at a substantially central position in a visual field of the auxiliary microscope.